



# CALPEEK

## CALIFORNIA POLITICAL WEEK

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### **CAMPAIGN 2000: THE RUN FOR THE WHITE HOUSE.**

Editor's note: Political insiders are asking the same thing, regardless of whether they're Demos or GOPers. What's happened to the GOP presidential campaign of Texas Gov. George W. Bush?? For the past month it seems as though Bush's campaign has been in a meltdown, despite the fact that in the national polls the race between Bush and Vice President Al Gore(D) remains fairly close – with Gore just slightly ahead for the time being. In Calif., the polls suggest that Gore has put the Golden State out of reach for Bush. Here's our analysis & commentary, with a look at some presidential polling data in Calif...

...If one looks for a date when this meltdown began for Bush, try Aug. 7<sup>th</sup> – the day that Gore named U.S. Sen. Joe Lieberman of CT as his VP running mate. Remember, prior to the Demo convention Bush was leading in the national polls. But the bounce coming out the L.A. convention on Aug. 17<sup>th</sup> put Gore up by several points (3 pts. in Zogby's 8/21 survey). This is about the time that Gore started building some momentum. FYI: a good deal of credit should go to Gore's new cmp. chair, Bill Daley...

...And while Gore was riding high, Bush's campaign stalled. Bush had trouble articulating his tax plan; he continued to stumble when speaking (*Bushspeak*); and his prescription drug plan for seniors was tough to understand. And Bush made more problems with his "A-hole" remark about NY Times reporter Adam Clymer, which took him off message. Bush's 5-day flap over debates (w/tv ad which was quickly pulled) again took him off message. As if this weren't bad enough, it was disclosed that veep candidate Dick Cheney *hasn't voted* in 14 of 16 elections in Texas – a huge sin for a GOP candidate. And as Calif. Demo Party spindoctor Bob Mulholland put it, "The dead in Chicago vote more often than Cheney."...

...And this latest flap about the attack ad aimed at Gore with a *subliminal message* – RATS, again has thrown the Bush campaign off balance. The ad was produced for the RNC by GOP media consultant Alex Castellanos. All of this must be discouraging to GOP down ballot candidates

across the country, some of whom are wondering if Bush is ready for prime time...

...So why is the race still so close? Three problem areas for Gore: 1) there is still some Clinton fatigue; 2) Green Party candidate Ralph Nader continues to pull from Gore's base vote on economic protectionism; and 3) Gore still has some problems with Blue Collar Demos on guns and the environment. All these problems are fixable – especially with Lieberman's help, but they probably cost Gore 3-5 points. Lieberman is a plus for Gore; Cheney is a minus or at best a neutral for Bush...

...So what about Calif.? If the election were held today, Gore wins by 13 points. Here's how it looks in two polls. One is the Field Poll (Aug. 18-22, 869 likely voters) and the other was taken for Gov. Gray Davis by his pollsters, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin (Sept. 5-10, 800 likely voters):

|           | <u>Field</u> | <u>Fairbank Maslin</u> |
|-----------|--------------|------------------------|
| Gore      | 50%          | 49%                    |
| Bush      | 37%          | 36%                    |
| Nader     | 4%           | 5%                     |
| Buchanan  | 2%           | 1%                     |
| Undecided | 7%           | 9%                     |

...FYI: DC-based Demo pollster Mark Mellman also has polled the presidential race in Calif. with results which are almost the same as FMM and Field. Stay tuned...

### **CAMPAIGN 2000: CALIFORNIA U.S. SENATE UPDATE.**

Editor's note: This has got to be one of the duller and most boring U.S. Senate races of all times here in Calif. Regardless, U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein(D) is considered a favorite to win reelection over U.S. Rep. Tom Campbell(R-San Jose). Here's our update & analysis...

...The new Field Poll continues to show DiFi with a commanding 51% to 34% lead over Campbell, with 15% of those polled undecided. The new Field Poll was taken Aug. 18-22 among 416 likely voters statewide. An earlier poll taken by the Public Policy Inst. of CA showed DiFi with

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52% vs. 33% for Campbell. This poll was taken July 28-Aug. 4 among 988 likely voters...

...And while it is true that Campbell made up some ground (he picked up **9 points** in the Field Poll from June), DiFi continues to hold her Demo base with 84% support and still holds 15% of the GOP vote. With independent/swing voters, it's DiFi 43% vs. 26% for Campbell with 31% undecided...

...Until her recent fall over Labor Day weekend (broken left tibia which will require surgery), DiFi was using a Rose Garden type campaign strategy: a very active campaign schedule here in Calif., combined with a heavy legislative agenda in DC – and trying not to miss any key votes (unlike Campbell). DiFi's latest legislative effort is with U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl(D-Wisconsin) – *The Defective Product Penalty Act*. If approved it would impose criminal penalties on those who knowingly release a dangerous and defective vehicle or vehicle part or withhold info about that product from U.S. govt. consumer agencies. Read is as the *Firestone Bill*...

...FYI: a very interesting article by L.A. Times staff writer Greg Krikorian about Campbell's campaign. The Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> article zeroed in on Campbell's problem with Jewish voters, especially Jewish GOPers. In the article, Campbell says "he's a committed friend of Israel," but wants to cut off all economic aid to Israel. According to *Calpeek* sources who monitor U.S. Congressional votes on Israel, Campbell is "*one of the 25 worst*" in the U.S. House when it comes to Israel. Stay tuned...

#### **CAMPAIGN 2000: WILL SCHOOL VOUCHER MEASURE BE BUSINESSMAN TIM DRAPER'S TICKET TO 2002??**

Editor's note: Silicon Valley venture capitalist Tim Draper's School Voucher Initiative (**Prop. 38** on Calif.'s Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> ballot) appears to be going down to defeat, according to the latest survey by pollster Mervin Field. But even if Prop. 38 is defeated, there is still a possibility that Draper will use his newly won name ID and his deep pockets to run for governor against Demo Gov. Gray Davis in 2002. Here's our update & analysis...

...The polling first. The new Field Poll shows Prop. 38 being defeated, if the election were held now. Here are the results of both June and August – for comparison...

|      | <u>June</u> | <u>August</u> |
|------|-------------|---------------|
| YES  | 39%         | 36%           |
| NO   | 39%         | 49%           |
| Und. | 22%         | 15%           |

...In this same poll, Field found that Demo voters reject vouchers by a margin of 64% to 23%, while GOP voters

support Prop. 38 by a margin of 56% to 29%. Among the independents it's YES 31% vs. NO 53%. Sources say that private polling shows almost the same thing...

...Both sides, in what promises to be a mega-buck campaign, have been off tv and radio for several weeks, but that will change very soon. And the YES side has just dropped a statewide VBM (vote by mail) piece. And check this out: while the early tv and radio spots were warm/feel good type ads, this VBM direct mail piece spins a very negative message about Calif. public schools. This probably signals an overall change in direction for the YES side. After all, if you spend around \$10 million on tv and radio and then drop 10 points, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that the campaign's message was several bricks short of a full load...

...The big question is why hasn't Draper's school voucher initiative been able to attract support from other U.S. school voucher advocates? The answer is that Draper's initiative, like so many initiatives, is flawed. For example, voucher schools are not required to provide any financial records to taxpayers, state agencies or the news media. And there's no special requirements or standards for teachers who instruct in voucher schools. There are other problems with this initiative as well...

...As for Draper's political future, insiders speculate that regardless of what happens to Prop. 38, this initiative will be the *opening salvo* in a Draper for Governor campaign in 2002, using education as his key issue. Should Gov. Davis be nervous? Calif. Republicans have a very weak bench when it comes to statewide candidates. Thus Draper, with his very deep pockets, might be a very appealing candidate to the GOP establishment. Stay tuned...

#### **CAMPAIGN 2000: UPDATE ON U.S. HOUSE CONTESTS.**

Editor's note: Here's another update on some of the hot U.S. House races in Calif...

☒ **20<sup>th</sup> CD Update** – This race is still on *Calpeek's watch list*, but may be moved into our toss up category. U.S. Rep. Cal Dooley(D-Visalia) hasn't been focused on this race since the primary and it shows. A 400/reg. voter poll (July 25-29) taken for GOP rival Rich Rodriguez by Public Opinion Strategies shows Rodriguez with a **41% vs. 40%** edge over the Demo congressman, with 19% undecided. Given the margin of error, it's possible Cooley could be leading. Cooley won the primary over Rodriguez by some **4,000** votes and his campaign team says, "We're focused now." Dooley's list of endorsements includes the U.S. Chamber, CA Police Chiefs Assn., Fresno Police Officers Assn., COPS, Crime Victims United, Voters for Choice (Dooley is pro-choice vs. Rodriguez who is anti-abortion), NEA and AFSCME...



...FYI: Both Dooley and Rodriguez went up on tv this past week. Dooley's ad touts his law & order endorsements, while the Rodriguez ad highlights his endorsement from the CA Farm Bureau Federation...

☒ **38<sup>th</sup> CD Update** – Demo Gerrie Schipske is touting an Aug. 6-8 poll of 400 likely voters by Lake, Snell, Perry & Assoc. which shows U.S. Rep. Steve Horn(R-Long Beach) holding a **43% to 32%** lead over Schipske, with 3% for others and 21% undecided. After "push questions," it's Horn 44% vs. 42% for Schipske. The 38<sup>th</sup> CD has an 18 pt. Demo registration advantage and Pres. Bill Clinton carried the 38<sup>th</sup> CD in both '92 and '96. That's why this CD is on our *watch list*...

#### **CAMPAIGN 2000: BATTLE FOR L.A. CO. ASSESSOR.**

Editor's note: Talk about low-profile local elections – this is it. The battle for Los Angeles County Assessor. Back in February, the L.A. Co. Board of Supervisors selected Rick Auerbach to replace Kenneth P. Hahn after Hahn resigned in the middle of his 2<sup>nd</sup> term for personal reasons. Hahn was not up again until 2002. Auerbach and 15 other candidates will face voters Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> in a very unusual *winner-take-all* election. Here's our update & analysis...

...With 16 people in this battle and with so little publicity or news about this race, some think it should be nominated for the *Rodney Dangerfield Award* - the campaign which is not getting any respect (or news media coverage). This contest is all about name ID, money, slates & endorsements. Those are the key elements in this contest, where the winner will be the one who gets **20-25%** of the vote. Most sources think Auerbach is the frontrunner, but with **7 deputy assessors** in the race, plus 2 assessment appeal board members, a city treasurer and the guy who used to be the assessor – well anything is possible...

...Yes, John Lynch, who became county assessor in 1986, only to lose reelection in 1990 to Hahn, is in the race. Lynch tried a comeback in 1994, but again lost to Hahn. He's also run unsuccessfully for judge. Regardless, Lynch has some residual name ID. The big problem for Lynch is that he can't use Former County Assessor as his ballot title...

...And then there's South Gate City Treasurer Albert Robles. In 1998, Robles ran for State Treasurer against Phil Angelides in the Demo primary. He didn't win, but got 868,251 statewide votes. Not bad for a guy who did it all with a good ballot title. Among the deputy assessors, Mark McNeil and Desmond Kester are the only two who will have a candidates' statement in the sample ballot. Lynch and Auerbach are there too, along with John Y. Wong, a member

of the assessment appeal board. The cost is \$26,400 for an English-only statement which goes to 3.8 million voters...

...Others in the race are retired deputy assessor John Brogdon; assessment appeal board chief Don Garcia; businessman Wayne Bannister; deputy assessor Eugene Driver; deputy assessor John Hasley; Khalil Khalil; deputy assessor Dan Kumaus; deputy assessor John Loew; deputy assessor Yolanda T. Salazar; and Peter Lee...

...Of the 15, Lynch, Salazar, McNeil, Robles and Wong are the ones to watch. For example, Wong has a very impressive list of endorsements: U.S. Reps. Ed Royce and Xavier Becerra; Assemblywomen Hilda Solis and Gloria Romero; plus L.A. Co. Sup. Mike Antonovich. One of Wong's key backers is Joe Sanchez, founder of the Mexican American Grocers Assn. and a key political fundraiser in East L.A...

...FYI: Back to Auerbach. He's been with the assessor's office 29 years and in 1997 was appointed by Hahn to be the assistant assessor. The campaign isn't due to make a financial disclosure for a few weeks, but sources say Auerbach has raised at least \$150,000, with another big fundraiser set for mid-October. In terms of endorsements, Kenneth Hahn is on the list, as are L.A. Co. Sheriff Lee Baca, L.A. Co. DA Gil Garcetti and L.A. Co. Supes Zev Yaroslavsky and Don Knabe. So are L.A. Mayor Dick Riordan & L.A. City Controller Rick Tuttle. Auerbach also won the endorsement of SEIU 660 and the CA Assn. of Professional Employees. Auerbach's campaign is being directed by the MWW Group (Harvey Englander), with Brian Rix & Pat Bradford handling fundraising. Lynch and Salazar are the only other candidates we know of who have professional campaign help. Joe Scott is working for Lynch, while attorney/consultant Tim Mock is helping Salazar. Stay tuned...

#### **CAMPAIGN 2000: UPDATE ON CALIF. SENATE RACES.**

Editor's note: This week **Calpeek** will update 2 very tight CA State Senate races: the 5<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> SD. Demos currently hold a 25-15 advantage over the GOP in the Legislature's upper house. 20 odd-numbered seats are up this year. Here's our update and analysis...

☒ **5<sup>th</sup> SD** – This is an OPEN seat now belonging to State Sen. Patrick Johnston(D-Stockton). In this battle between Demo Assemblyman Mike Machado and Lodi Councilman Alan Nakanishi, **Calpeek** rated this battle as a *toss up*. We still do, but things have become more *complicated* for Demo consultant Richie Ross, who is Machado's consultant. The Demo Assemblyman has been pounded in the local press for the past 10 days over remarks he made on the Assembly Floor to State Sen. Maurice Johannessen(R-Redding). The

remark was overheard by at least one other person (Michael Umbrello of the Cahto Tribe who was on the senate floor w/Johannessen opposing Machado's CALFED water bill). As reported in the Stockton Record, Machado told Johannessen "to go back to where he came from." Does that mean Norway? or does that mean go back to the State Senate side of the building? Johannessen thinks it was an ethnic slur by Machado. Machado's response: a fantasy, a fabrication. Johannessen says there also was an ethnic slur remark made by Machado about Nakanishi, but there's no independent or 3<sup>rd</sup> party confirmation. Machado's campaign says much of brouhaha is nothing more than political spin. Perhaps, but the local papers are not siding with Machado...

☒ **7<sup>th</sup> SD Update** – This is the intense battle between incumbent GOP State Sen. Dick Rainey of Walnut Creek and Demo Assemblyman Tom Torlakson. In 1996 the 7<sup>th</sup> SD changed from Demo to GOP when Rainey won the seat by just **659 votes** over Contra Costa Co. Sup. Jeff Smith. This year's battle may be just as close. A poll conducted by the Torlakson campaign (Evans/McDonough, July 12-16, 800 likely voters) shows the contest dead even: 38% each, with 24% undecided. In the primary, Torlakson got 122,081 vs. 119,543 for Rainey. A 2<sup>nd</sup> GOP candidate picked up 9,114 votes. Registration is 44%(D) vs. 38%(R) and both sides will be well funded. In terms of campaign teams, Rainey is now with GOP consultant Joe Justin, while Torlakson's longtime consultant, Gale Kaufman, bowed out after the primary. Torlakson's new team includes lead consultant Larry Tramutola and daily cmp. mgr. Andrew Acosta. Stay tuned...

#### **CALPEEK'S INFOBAHN: POLITICAL SHORT TAKES.**

Editor's note: Here are a few items, political & otherwise, worth noting...

■ **SB 28 Passes Legislature** – There's life again for an *open primary law* in Calif. because Gov. Davis is expected to sign **SB 28** by State Sen. Steve Peace(D-El Cajon). This bill allows **Decline to State voters** to cast ballots in either a Demo or GOP presidential primary, provided that the parties give their OK. The Demos have already done this...

■ **The Calif. Energy Crisis** – There are winners & losers in this still unfolding story about the State's attempt (so far not very successful) to deregulate the energy industry in Calif. Gov. Davis signed 2 bills which will speed up the building of new power plants and will give a break to San Diego Gas & Electric Co.'s 1.2 million customers. But one of the losers is State Sen. Steve Peace(D-El Cajon), who along with Sen. Jim Brulte(R-Rancho Cucamonga), were the chief architects of Calif.'s deregulation law. Betting now is

that Peace will not run for statewide office in 2002 because of this major brouhaha over deregulation. Brulte seems to have escaped major criticism – so far...

■ **SEIU 660 Backs Cooley for DA** – Even though incumbent L.A. Co. DA Gil Garcetti has most of the major labor unions on his side for reelection, the action of SEIU Local 660 recently breaking away to endorse Head Deputy DA Steve Cooley was another setback for Garcetti. SEIU 660 supported Garcetti both in '92 and '96. The union local represents about 2,000 clerical, admin. and technical workers in the DA's office...

■ **Calif. Gets Higher Bond Rating** – Thanks to this very healthy economy, both Standard & Poor's and Moody's Investors Service have upgraded Calif.'s bond rating from AA- to AA (S&P) and Aa3 to Aa2 (Moody's)...

#### **CALPEEK'S CALENDAR OF POLITICAL EVENTS**

|             |                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sept. 21-22 | 12 <sup>th</sup> Annual Envisioning Calif. Conference. E-Democracy, Education & Initiatives. Sacramento, CA. Info (916)447-7415. |
| Sept. 30    | Last day for governor to sign or veto bills.                                                                                     |
| Oct. 3      | Presidential Debate – Kennedy Library in Boston (tentative).                                                                     |
| Oct. 5      | Vice Presidential Debate – Danville, KY (tentative).                                                                             |
| Oct. 10     | Last day to register to vote.                                                                                                    |
| Oct. 11     | Presidential Debate, St. Louis, MO (tentative).                                                                                  |
| Oct. 17     | Presidential Debate, Winston-Salem, NC (tentative).                                                                              |

#### **CALPEEK'S NEW JOBS AND PERSONNEL NOTICES.**

Editor's note: Here are some items to mark down in your notebook...

● If you're wondering why you haven't seen L.A. Times political staff writer Dave Leshner's byline as of late it's because he's now deputy nat'l editor for politics...

● The West Coast office of Emily's List has a new HQ: 120 Howard St., Ste. B, San Francisco, CA 94105. The ☎(415)658-0700...

● Newest member of the Modoc Co. Board of Supes is William K. Hagge of Alturas, owner of Hagge Ranch. He was elected in March, but with Gov. Davis' appointment Hagge can take his board seat immediately...

● Gov. Gray Davis has named Elaine M. Howle as the State Auditor. Howle is the deputy state auditor for the Bureau of State Audits...